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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Toying With Toys" - Information from Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

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During this last week or so before Christmas...maybe you'll wish you had an extra toy or two for your childrens' tree. And perhaps you don't have the time... or money...to shop for them.

The Department of Agriculture has some good suggestions if such is the case. The basis is that you make toys at home. You know, there are many which are easily made...from things you have around the house too...like spools, odd pieces of wood ...and boxes.

There's one made entirely from spools...and a long shoelace...that children three years old or over will love. Paint as many spools as you like with bright colors. You can use spools of various sizes...and as many as you like...six or seven is a good number.

Tie one spool to the end of a long shoelace...or a tape. Then string the others on at various intervals. To help in the stringing...prepare one end of the string for needling.

This can be easily done. Wrap 2 or 3 inches of the string tightly with sewing thread...then dip it in enamel, glue, shellac, or varnish...and allow it to dry. This stiffened end acts as a needle for stringing.

Before you know it...you've a gay toy...that any child over three years old will like. And furthermore...it's a safe toy...and one that can be kept clean.

Then there's another one...this time for children between 2 and 4 years old. This toy can be made from some clothes pins and a wooden box. Paint the pins different, bright colors...and fit them over the edge of a small painted wooden box. A cigar box will do the trick.

That's all there is to it...and there's a toy children can enjoy. Placing and removing the pins will keep them happy...and quiet.

For variation of activity...attach a string to the box. This arrangement makes a sturdy little wagon a small child will enjoy pulling around. If you like...you can make wheels for the wagon out of a few spools.

There are lots of toys you can make...once you get started. Blocks...for instance...are easily made from a few boxes. But remember...when you paint any toys for children...don't use paint with lead in it. Cheap enamel tends to crack and peel. For coloring small wooden toys, use cake coloring, household bluing, or Easter egg dyes.

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